

## Linking our Arms Together!

(Virtually!)

King County has put out the call for essential workers to show up and provide critical transit services to the residents of the Metro service area. Twenty-two or more ATU 587 members became infected with COVID-19 and thankfully 18 have returned to work. We will forever remember Samina Hameed and Mike Winkler, Operators who paid the ultimate price. We continue to mourn their passing. These difficult times have galvanized our membership to demand the highest levels of protections possible and focused our leaders to continue to fight for dignity and respect, with safety being the utmost priority.

We have come to understand that Metro, while facing a dire 10-year economic forecast, is searching to plug a deep hole in funding. We also understand that what becomes of the current King County-ATU Tentative Agreement has downstream consequences for the Coalition and other bargaining units that are still (or shortly will be) at the bargaining table. County Executive Constantine wrote in his June 18<sup>th</sup> letter to us: "By joining together, as labor and management, to modify a labor agreement reached in a different context... we can reduce the need for more extreme cuts and job losses. The workforce impact of this unprecedented economic downturn is a shared problem. We must seek a shared solution."

It was therefore shocking that just days of receiving this letter we have been notified that Metro will be laying off at least 200 ATU 587 members in 'round one.' Metro has projected that as many as 450 ATU represented positions may be cut. We don't believe any givebacks offered by workers now are going to change that trajectory. Between the rainy-day fund, the CARES grant, and the probable renewal of some Seattle TBD funds, the Metro financial cliff exists outside the 10/31/22 end of the Tentative Agreement.

ATU should not, and will not, agree to participate in a plan that undercuts the integrity of the collective bargaining process. The start of this period was well underway before nearly 3000 of our members submitted their ratification ballots in May resulting in a 94% YES vote. Please pay attention to the thousands in the labor and transit communities who have a fair expectation that transit workers will be respected and provided the raises they have negotiated. No zeros for our heroes!

The Tentative Agreement between King County and ATU Local 587 must continue through the ratification process. The Council has always expressed support for Metro employees. We doubt that they will turn their backs on us now. We agree with you that it is time to halt this cyclical funding crisis and use our energy to better finance the \$2.2-billion shortfall through 2028 that you are forecasting. ATU 587, the Martin Luther King Jr. County Labor Council and the Transit Riders Union have always partnered with you to rally support for transit funding measures, and we look forward to doing so again in the future.

We respectfully urge a unanimous **YES** vote on the Tentative Agreement.



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